

NAPLAN Proficiency Level Descriptions

Reading Year 5 - Strong

Example texts



Lost!

Maya looked behind and ahead. Both ways she was faced with a narrow passageway, lit with stabs of light from flickering bulbs along the wall. Whose idea was it to try the Spy World Maze Challenge? A smug voice in her head replied, *Yours!*

Kelly and Ethan were nowhere in sight, and nowhere in sound either. They had all agreed to take different paths, using different strategies: Ethan following the right-hand wall, Kelly following the left, and Maya just trusting her instincts. The first contestant to the centre would win their whole team a year's entry pass to the Spy World Activity Centre, where they would get to learn real spy skills. So what was the point of staying together?

She turned another corner, then another, then backed up and tried a few consecutive left turns. When she started the Challenge, she had been imagining what her mum would say: *Come on. You can do it. You don't give up easily.* All positive thoughts. But now her head was empty.

Everything was empty. She couldn't even hear her own breathing. The grey walls stared at her. She had to get rid of her jacket. She pulled at her sleeve, struggling to get her arms out, overcome with an itchy, prickling feeling. She put her hand to her head, noticing the damp skin, the pounding underneath. She crumpled to the floor. A bitter voice came in: *You're stuck. You're lost. There is no way out. Get it?* Her eyes closed.

'Left, this time.' A different voice. And another: 'Okay, now that way. What? It's Maya. Yay!' Maya looked up to see Kelly, then Ethan. 'No time for a rest, Maya. We're nearly there. I can tell.' They pulled her up, noisy, excited, ready to go. And they were right: two more turns was all.

The Burrunan dolphin

Dolphins are commonly seen in the waters of Australia and many environmental groups have been formed to study and protect Australia's dolphin species. Therefore, it was surprising that in two places in Australia recently, scientists found a type of dolphin that had not been identified before. This is especially interesting news because only two other types of dolphins have been discovered since the 1800s!

Scientists named their discovery the Burrunan dolphin. The name comes from the Boonwurrung, Woiwurrung and Taungurung Aboriginal languages, and means 'large sea fish of the porpoise kind'. A group of about 100 Burrunan dolphins lives near Melbourne, and another group lives in the Gippsland Lakes. Because the two small groups are separated, it is difficult for the population to grow.

In 1915, scientists captured a Burrunan dolphin, but they identified it incorrectly. Recently, scientists studied Burrunan dolphin groups again, this time using modern tools to compare them with other dolphin species. They looked at the dolphins' genes (information found in the cells of living things). After carefully checking their data, they decided that the Burrunan is a unique type of dolphin.

There are more clues that the Burrunan is distinct from other dolphin species. The fin on the Burrunan's back is more curved than the fins of other dolphins. The Burrunan's nose is shorter. And Burrunans are tricoloured: light grey, dark grey and white. Most dolphins are grey and black.

In June 2013, the Burrunan dolphin was added to a list of protected animals. This action may help future Australians enjoy this unique dolphin.



A photo of the Burrunan dolphin



Why we should care about Antarctic krill

The ecosystem of the huge Southern Ocean that surrounds Antarctica depends upon tiny creatures that weigh only about two grams each. There are so many of these creatures and they travel in such massive groups (swarms) that, in spite of their small size, they can be seen from space! Without them the food web of the Southern Ocean would fall apart. These tiny yet indispensable creatures are Antarctic krill.

Most marine animals in the region—including mammals such as whales and seals, birds such as penguins and albatrosses, and most varieties of fish—have a diet largely made up of Antarctic krill. A blue whale eats about four tonnes of these tiny prawn-like organisms each day. Significant changes to the number of krill in the Southern Ocean will affect all these species.

Although they are among the most abundant animals on Earth, Antarctic krill are at risk. Environmental changes and commercial krill fishing have reduced their numbers and now the Southern Ocean has too few krill to support the populations of animals that depend on them. Studies show that drops in krill populations in even small areas can lead to a decline in the number of penguins, whales and seals.

What can be done?

The AKCP (Antarctic Krill Conservation Project) wants limits for Antarctic krill fishing lowered. The Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources is an international agreement which sets limits on fishing in Antarctic waters. A change to the convention could safeguard the krill and the magnificent creatures that depend on them for future generations.

Acknowledgements

Lost!

Image of passageway © Stephen Mulcahey / Alamy Stock Photo (image cropped)

The Burrunan dolphin

Image of Burrunan dolphin © Dirk Rueter / Alamy

Why we should care about Antarctic krill

Image of krill © Dmytro Pylypenko / Alamy Stock Photo (image cropped to remove background and krill rotated)